



School Safety Newsletter

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Study Finds Peak Months for College Students' First Drug Use

Big Story, August 27, 2015

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/2c9734c454884b91955ab20807ed3ce2/study-finds-peak-months-college-students-1st-drug-use>

College students tend to experiment with specific types of drugs for the first time during certain times of the year, according to a federal study.

College students tend to try stimulants such as Adderall and Ritalin for the first time in November, December or April, according to the examination of 12 years of government survey data. They may believe the attention deficit disorder medications will help them ace their exams, even though there is no medical evidence that such drugs enhance performance and such drugs can be addictive.

Students are most likely to try marijuana, inhalants and alcohol for the first time during the summer, not the school year, according to the report released Thursday by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which examined data from the annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

First use of cigarettes peaks in June, September and October. Underage college students who have never tried alcohol before are most likely to have it for the first time in June. First-time use of cigars, marijuana and inhalants is highest in June and July, and the first nonmedical use of prescription painkillers happens most often in December.

The new findings suggest that prevention messages could be targeted at the months when college students are most vulnerable, said Brendan Saloner, an addiction researcher at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who wasn't involved in the study.

"For most of the substances, what you're seeing is a summer peak. Young people may have more time on their hands and less supervision," Saloner said. "For stimulants, first use seems to peak around finals. There's a lot of anxiety and stress around final exams and a push for students to do as well as they can."

While many American teenagers start drinking in high school, the report suggests many do not. About 1,200 underage students each day, on average, try alcohol for the first time while in college, according to the analysis.

Other reports using the same survey have found the average age of first alcohol use is about 17 in the United States, with other drug initiation tending to be later. First marijuana use happens at about age 18 and first nonmedical use of prescription stimulants or painkillers typically happens at about age 21 to 22, according to the 2013 survey.

The report sought to determine the average number of full-time college students using substances for the first time for each month of the year. It combined information from 68,600 full-time college students answering the 2002 through 2013 surveys.

Pinpointing the months of first-time use is a new way to look at the data, said Rear Adm. Peter Delany, the director of SAMHSA's Center for Behavioral Health Statistics, which produced the report.

*Protecting our
future through
information
sharing*

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Study Finds Peak Months for College Students' First Drug Use(continue)

"These are times when parents may want to think about checking in," said Delany, whose son is a college freshman. "The No. 1 thing to do is talk to your kids in a non-emotional way and tell them what expectations you have."

Other research has found that college students listen to their parents. The Maryland Collaborative to Reduce College Drinking and Related Problems offers tools and scripts for parents.

Parents of new college students "breathe a big sigh of relief that they got them through high school," said Amelia Arria of University of Maryland, a co-director of the collaborative. "Parents should be more aware that college presents a risky environment (for drug and alcohol use) that can impair academic achievement and derail a student's chances of success."

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Student Health Report Highlights Physical Activity and Mental Illness Rates Among America's Youth

August 19, 2015

<http://www.medicaldaily.com/pulse/cdcs-student-health-report-highlights-physical-activity-and-mental-illness-rates-348540>

Adolescence is a time for parents and teachers to intervene and instill key healthy habits to develop into a lifelong routine. In order to improve current adolescent health, the CDC met on August 18, 2015 for the Public Health Grand Rounds dedicated to "Adolescence: Preparing for Lifelong Health and Wellness."

In the United States alone, there are 42 million children, between the ages of 10 and 19 years old. Out of those adolescents, 91 percent are enrolled in an academic institution. According to the CDC, school lends itself as an "ideal place" to develop and engrave healthy behaviors they can carry well into adulthood. It's also a convenient place to collect data on their health history and current levels of physical activity, HIV/AIDS testing, cigarette use, and record any diagnosable mental, behavioral, and emotional disorders.

"Adolescence is a critical stage of development during which physical, intellectual, emotional, and psychological changes occur," the CDC wrote. "While adolescence is a relatively healthy period of life, adolescents begin to make lifestyle choices and establish behaviors that affect both their current and future health."

The CDC presented results from national school surveys to provide a bigger picture of American children's overall health. Only 31 percent of middle school and high school students are getting at least five days of exercise a week. Meanwhile 40 percent of students exercise between one and four days a week, and 30 percent don't exercise at all.

A newer issue in the United States is electronic cigarette use, which has been blamed for targeting teens with fruity flavors. Conventional cigarette use itself dropped five percent between 2013 and 2014, but e-cigarette use more than replaced the gap by increasing use by more than 10 percent over that same year. And as far as HIV and AIDS testing is concerned, the CDC reports 77 percent of students 12 years of age and older go untested, while another 10 percent are uncertain.

As for student mental illness, Utah may seem to have an alarmingly high rate compared to the rest of the United States. However, the state has a very unique law compared to the rest of the country. The Supreme Court ruled to protect a minor's constitutional right to privacy, but Utah is the only state that does not meet this requirement, according to Guttmacher Institute. Therapists and counselors can then report any mental illnesses to parents and guardians, which is why more children and adolescents are identified and properly diagnosed.

The next CDC Grand Rounds Session will be held in September, on "Preventing Suicide: A Comprehensive Public Health Approach." The session is scheduled to address both youth and adult suicide risk factors and rates in the United States.

**Monthly
Webinars!**

First
Wednesday
of Every
Month at 10
am.

**Next
Webinar -
October 7,
2015**

Each webinar
has a round
table discussion
at the end.
Questions are
always
welcome!

To participate, you
must be a vetted
member. For

A Note for the New School Year from the Illinois School Resource Officers Association (ILSROA)

The start of a new school year is exciting for parents, students, staff, and School Resource Officers (SROs). As SROs, we eagerly greet new students and rekindle acquaintances with returning students when school begins each fall. We hope to strengthen the foundation of safety that we built in the past year and make this school year even better. We walk miles in hallways, and our visibility assures students and staff that we are guarding their safety.

SROs are more than a police presence in schools. We are counselors, teachers, and parental figures to the students. By our example, we can be persons whom students trust and with whom they share any information. An SRO who has gained the confidence of students is likely to be the one informed about issues such as weapons being on school premises or arguments escalating to fights before serious consequences occur.

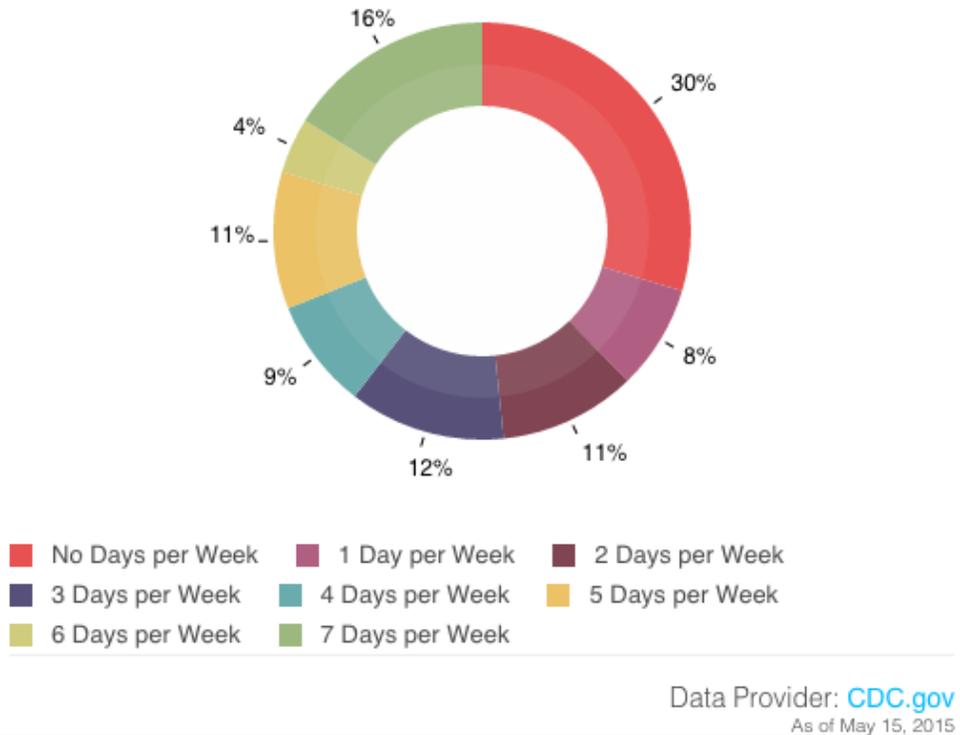
SROs need to maintain their enthusiasm throughout the school year and not become stagnant in their interaction with those who rely on their protection. I challenge my fellow SROs and school administrators to make a difference in at least one student's life each day. A warm smile or a friendly hello can engender trust and leave a lasting and favorable impression to make a student feel important and confident. SROs have contact with more people each day than anyone else in their departments. Make that contact positive. Stay visual; stay alert; and, sustain the same excitement and enthusiasm of the first weeks of school throughout each month and semester of the school year. You have the power to make a difference in each student's life.

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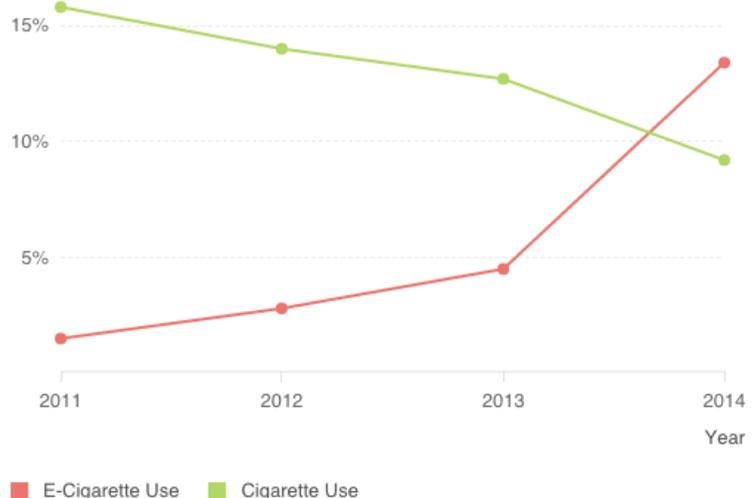
CDC's Student Health Report Highlights Physical Activity and Mental Illness Rates Among America's Youth (continue)

Frequency of Adolescent Exercise in 2012

The information pertains to individuals 12 and older, who were currently enrolled in Middle or High School



E-Cigarette vs. Cigarette Use in Adolescents 2011-2014



CDC's Student Health Report Highlights Physical Activity and Mental Illness Rates Among America's Youth (continue)

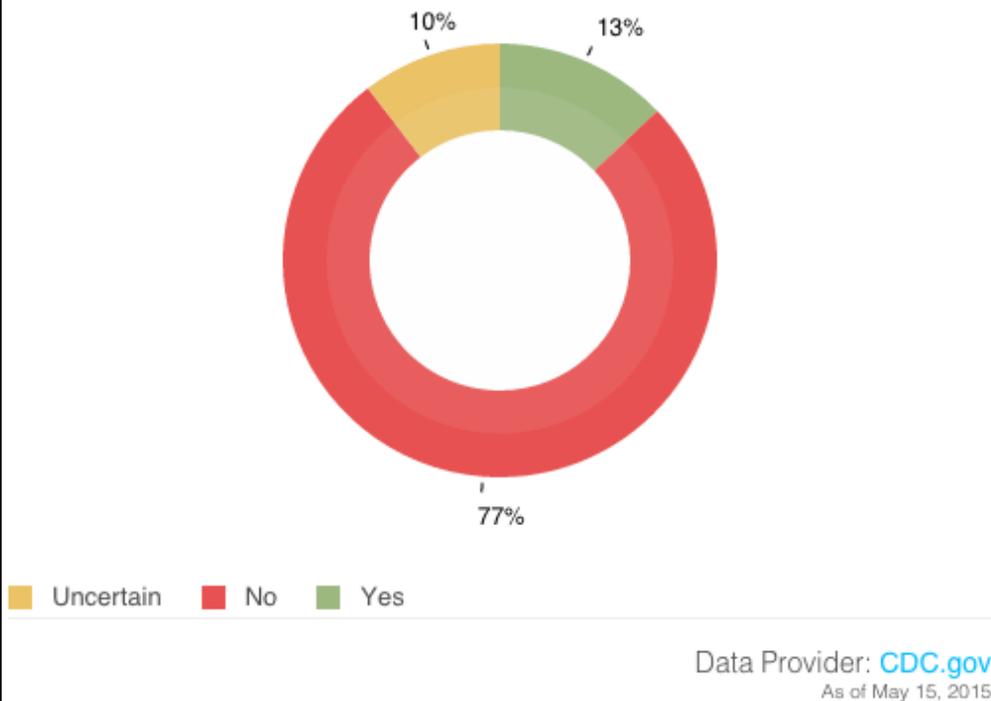
Mia Ray Langheim

School Intelligence Officer

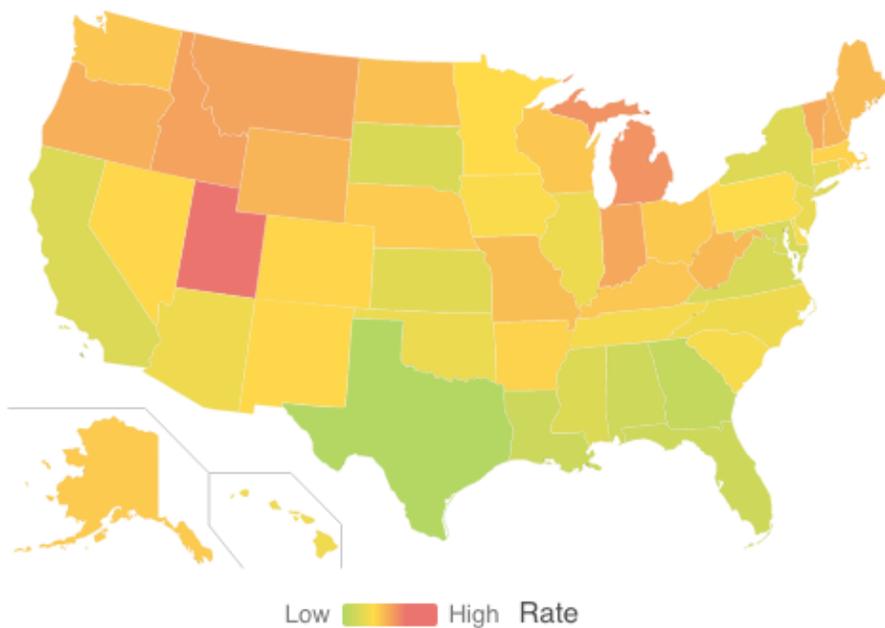


Percentage of Adolescents Testing for HIV/AIDS

The information pertains to individuals 12 and older, who were currently enrolled in Middle or High School



Adolescents with a Serious Mental Illness



Data reflects percent of adolescents 12-17 who had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder in the past year, as of 2013. Mental illness diagnoses were assessed by the Mental Health Surveillance Study (MHSS), which is based on the DSM-IV.

Data Provider: SAMHSA

School Safety Newsletter

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